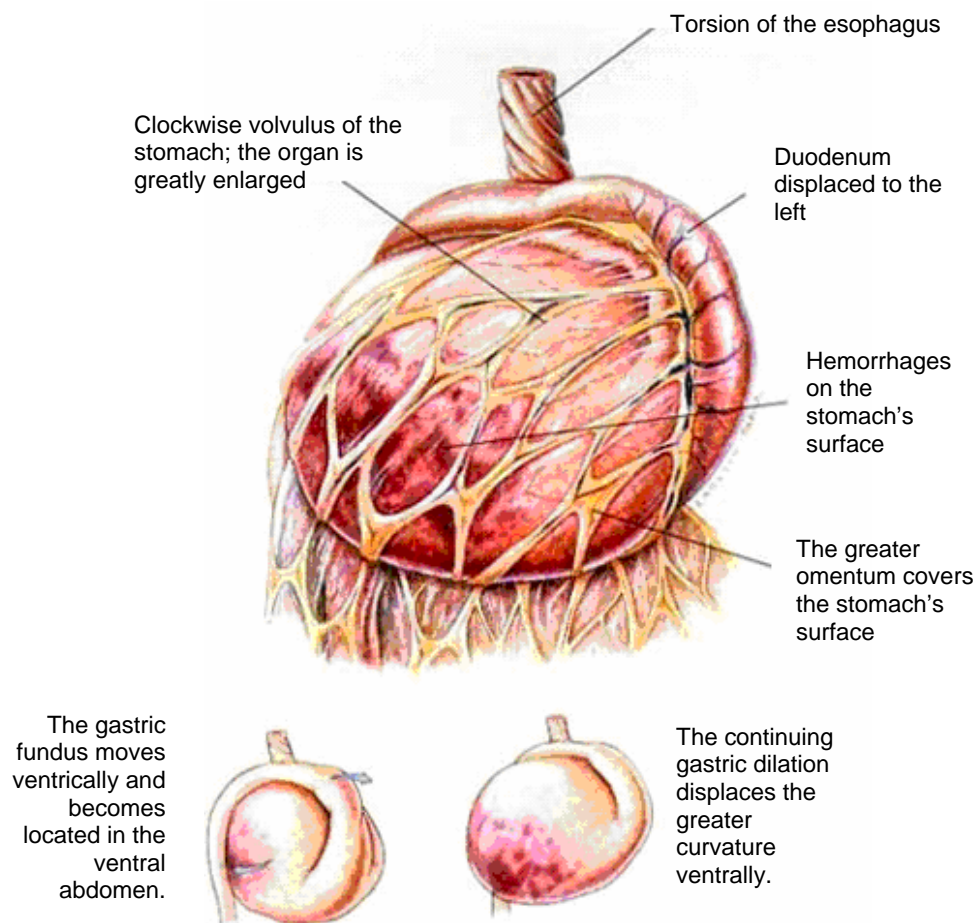




Gastric Dilation with Volvulus



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Diagnostic Plan

History
Physical examination
X-rays of the stomach
Blood work

Therapeutic Plan

Stomach distention relief
Therapy for shock
Surgery

Nutritional Plan

Low-residue food fed in small portions
Divide daily ration into multiple small meals

Gastric Dilation with Volvulus

Your pet has gastric dilation with volvulus. In this condition, the stomach is greatly enlarged and twisted, obstructing the digestive tract. Therapy for this life-threatening condition includes treatment for shock, surgical repositioning of the stomach and measures to prevent recurrence. This client education sheet will help you learn more about gastric dilation with volvulus and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

What You Should Know About Gastric Dilation with Volvulus

In gastric dilation with volvulus, the stomach becomes greatly enlarged with swallowed air and sometimes food. The stomach then rotates or twists, trapping air, food and digestive fluid. Rotation of the stomach twists vessels that supply blood to the stomach. Interference with blood flow results in inadequate supplies of oxygen to the cells that form the stomach wall. A greatly enlarged stomach also presses on blood vessels that carry blood from the abdomen to the heart. The reduced flow of blood back to the heart causes shock.

Causes

The causes of gastric dilation with volvulus aren't well understood. But the histories of pets affected are often similar, suggesting that certain risk factors may be involved. These factors include: genetics; conformation; age; temperament; eating one large meal a day; delayed emptying of the stomach due to obstruction or disease; and swallowing air. The ligaments that support the stomach of dogs with gastric dilation with volvulus are often lax, allowing for excess movement of the stomach. The electrical activity of stomach muscles may also be altered in these dogs.

Signs

Your dog may show signs such as excessive salivation, unsuccessful efforts to vomit, enlarged abdomen, belching or weakness.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of gastric dilation with volvulus is based on the history you provide and your pet's clinical signs and physical condition. X-rays are often taken by your veterinarian to confirm that the stomach has rotated. Blood tests, a urinalysis and EKGs are useful for diagnosing complicating conditions.

Treatment and Home Care

The first step in treatment is to decompress (remove the air) from your pet's stomach. Your veterinarian will first attempt to do this by passing a tube through your pet's mouth to its stomach. Therapy for shock will also be started soon after you reach the hospital. After your pet is stable, your veterinarian will take X-rays to determine whether the stomach is still rotated. If it is, surgery will be needed to reposition it. After repositioning the stomach, your veterinarian will probably attach the stomach to the body wall or ribs on the right side of the animal. This helps prevent volvulus from recurring.

Home care consists of giving all prescribed medications, following your veterinarian's advice for exercise restriction and watching for signs that gastric dilation has recurred. You should also check your pet's incision at least once a day for swelling and discharges. You should call your veterinarian if the signs of gastric dilation recur, if your pet stops eating or becomes depressed or if a problem develops with the suture line. Sutures will need to be removed according to the schedule provided by your veterinarian.

You should be aware that gastric dilation tends to recur. If your pet's stomach was affixed to the right body wall or ribs, the tendency to twist is greatly reduced, but the stomach can still enlarge. You should take precautions to help prevent recurrence. These precautions include limiting activity after eating, and feeding two or three small meals a day instead of one large one.

Nutritional Plan

If your pet has had gastric dilation with volvulus your veterinarian may give you special feeding instructions. Patients that have stomach disorders may benefit from foods that are highly digestible during the recovery process. Such foods are reduced in fiber, which lessens irritation to the stomach, and reduced in fat, to help promote emptying of food from the stomach. Foods with these nutritional characteristics include Hill's® Prescription Diet® i/d® Canine Gastrointestinal Health. Your veterinarian may also recommend that you continue to feed Prescription Diet® i/d® to your pet as a maintenance food because of its reduced fiber and fat content and high digestibility.

Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). Feed only the recommended food. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

Presented as an educational service by



Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: _____

Patient's Name: _____

Medication(s): _____

Nutritional Recommendation: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.